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Government of the Province of Alberta

THE

Annual Report

OF THE

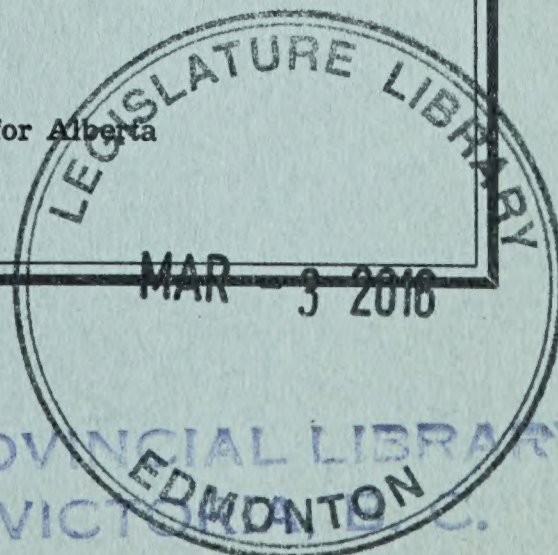
Fire Commissioner

1953

Department of Provincial Secretary

Published by Direction of
THE HONOURABLE C. E. GERHART
Provincial Secretary

Edmonton
Printed by A. Shnitka, Queen's Printer for Alberta
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GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA
DEPARTMENT OF PROVINCIAL SECRETARY
OFFICE OF THE FIRE COMMISSIONER

Edmonton, April 29th, 1954

To: THE HONOURABLE C. E. GERHART, M.L.A.
Provincial Secretary of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta

DEAR SIR:

Pursuant to the provisions of section 35 of The Fire Prevention Act, I have the honour to submit the Thirty-Fourth Annual Report of the operations of the Office of the Fire Commissioner for the calendar year 1953.

- (1) A comparison of 1953 and 1952 fire losses is as follows:

(a) Year	Number of fires	Per cent decrease	Amount of loss	Per cent increase
1953	2,553	18	\$5,652,339	21
1952	3,130	.....	4,545,444	.....

- (b) Loss of life, 1953—54 Loss of life, 1952—36

There is a marked increase of loss of life and two-thirds of the deaths occurred in rural areas. The increase of fire loss is mainly in areas not protected by municipal fire fighters and not having regular fire inspection service. The decrease in the number of fires is an encouraging trend.

- (2) Eighty-three large losses of \$10,000 or over accounted for almost three-quarters of the total fire loss. Six large fires occurred on property under federal jurisdiction and accounted for one-quarter of the total fire loss.
- (3) Table 6 enables us to view trends in property loss compared with losses in the previous year. Below we have listed some of the most noteworthy:

Class of Property	No. of Fires	Amount of Loss
Urban dwellings	Decrease 32%	Increase 12%
Farm properties	Decrease 20%	Increase 1%
Schools	Decrease 5%	Increase 23%
Hospitals	Decrease 63%	Decrease 24%
Hotels	Decrease 44%	Decrease 1800%
Retail stores	Decrease 21%	Decrease 30%
Flour mills and grain elevators	Decrease 47%	Decrease 53%
Oil risks and tank fires	Decrease 22%	Increase 15%
Lumber yards	Increase 400%	Increase 288%
Garage and metal workers	Decrease 4%	Increase 453%
Manufacturing premises	Decrease 36%	Increase 103%
Non-manufacturing	Decrease 11%	Increase 145%

- (4) In causes of fires as shown in table 7, SMOKERS' CARELESSNESS leads the list in number but STOVES, FURNACES and SMOKE PIPES was the most costly single cause. INCENDIARISM doubled in frequency and was the second largest single cause of property loss. OVER-HEATED or DEFECTIVE CHIMNEYS and FLUES fires increased substantially and the property loss from this cause was third in order of destructiveness.
- (5) Inspection and investigation activities of the branch reported to this office are as shown in tables 9, 10 and 12. More requests for investigations were received and this resulted in the discovery of more incendiary fires.
- (6) The work of the Fire Protection Instruction Unit is shown in table 9 and it is evident that there is constant demand for this assistance to the municipal fire-fighting forces. The Fire Commissioner and his staff continued to be active in Civil Defence. Four regional schools were held at Grande Prairie, Edmonton, Calgary and Lethbridge at which 84 firemen received instructors' training. Special work on the fire hose conversion program was continued under supervision of this branch and one-fifth of the work has been completed. Five civil defence pumpers were sent from Ottawa for training of the auxiliary fire service and this program has also been supervised by the Fire Commissioner. The staff of the Fire Commissioner has been increased by one Inspector, namely Robert Elder, formerly of the Drumheller Fire Department. The staff now comprises the Fire Commissioner, Deputy Fire Commissioner, seven Inspectors, three Stenographers and one Clerk Stenographer.
- (7) A Fire Prevention program has been continued as in previous years, with careful attention given to inspection work and fire prevention education. The Province of Alberta received a special award from the National Fire Prevention Association for outstanding growth in province-wide fire prevention work during fire prevention week. There were 185 reports completed and 29 merit awards were received by municipalities and by provincial government institutions.
- (8) The Lightning Rod Act and regulations are administered by this branch. Three companies were licensed to sell lightning rod materials and 49 of their agents were licensed to install lightning rod materials. Six complaints were investigated and three special investigations made. There were 1,068 installations reported during the year.
- (9) The Association of Canadian Fire Marshals met at Winnipeg, Manitoba, and was presided over by the Fire Commissioner of Alberta. Other association meetings of the fire service attended by the Fire Commissioner were; the Saskatchewan Fire Chiefs' Association at Saskatoon and the Alberta Fire Chiefs' Association at Red Deer. The office continued its support of firemen competitions and prizes were awarded at Calgary, Redwater, Coleman, Vegreville and Fairview. The Fire Commissioner attended a Civil Defence Fire Forum at Vancouver and continued to act as Chairman of the Fire and Flood Committee, Provincial Civil Defence Headquarters.
- (10) I wish to report the excellent co-operation and faithful discharge of duties by my staff which has made possible the maximum service to the public. The members of the fire service and particularly the members of

the volunteer fire departments are to be commended for their efforts to prevent and to reduce fire losses. I also want to express appreciation of the work done by municipal councils, municipal, provincial and federal police and fire officers, insurance company inspectors and adjusters, the Fire Underwriters' Investigation Bureau and by all other organizations and individuals whose efforts have been directed towards reduction of Alberta's fire waste.

Respectfully submitted,

AUSTIN E. BRIDGES,
Fire Commissioner

TABLE NO. 1
A COMPARISON OF THE MONTHLY LOSSES IN 1952 AND 1953

Month	1952		1953	
	No. of Fires	Loss	No. of Fires	Loss
January	390	\$ 634,242	333	\$ 743,084
February	259	361,123	220	551,461
March	315	651,249	215	360,443
April	340	412,578	226	253,629
May	313	454,575	238	182,037
June	216	178,767	173	189,718
July	239	917,210	204	182,823
August	225	145,604	193	213,829
September	178	170,328	190	209,411
October	241	309,112	189	490,011
November	205	138,075	162	604,405
December	209	172,581	210	1,671,488
TOTAL	3,130	\$4,545,444	2,553	\$5,652,339

TABLE NO. 2
COMPARISON OF YEARLY FIRE LOSSES FROM JANUARY 1, 1944, TO
DECEMBER 31, 1953

Calendar Year	No. of Fires	Property Loss	No. of Deaths	Per Capita Loss
1944	1,634	\$ 1,896,283.59	36	2.32
1945	2,138	2,208,199.71	30	2.67
1946	2,308	2,544,688.99	45	3.20
1947	2,118	2,237,643.29	31	2.72
1948	2,285	3,815,868.36	49	4.51
1949	2,464	5 299,584.00	37	6.08
1950	2,798	5,242,553.00	37	5.85
1951	3,009	4,661,963.00	28	4.98
1952	3,130	4,545,444.00	36	4.84
1953	2,553	5,652,339.00	54	4.71
TEN-YEAR TOTAL	24,437	\$38,104,566.94	383	
Population (1953)	1,200,000	Per Capita Loss (1953)	4.71	

TABLE NO. 3
CLASSIFICATION AND CAUSES OF PROPERTY LOSS IN 1953
(Reference to Table No. 6)

Property	Causes	No. of Fires
DWELLINGS, APARTMENTS THEIR GARAGES AND OUTBUILDINGS— EXCLUDING FARMS		
(a) Brick—Protected		
Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)		23
Unknown causes of fire		8
Miscellaneous causes of fire		4
Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes		2
Exposure fires		2
Hot ashes, coals and open fires		1
Lights (other than electric)		1
Electricity		1
		42

TABLE NO. 3 (Continued)

Property	Causes	No. of Fires
(b) Frame—Protected		
	Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)	703
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	171
	Unknown causes of fire	117
	Electricity	82
	Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes	75
	Matches (other than smoker's carelessness)	72
	Hot ashes, coals and open fires	32
	Exposure fires	23
	Chimneys, flues (overheated and defective)	21
	Lightning (unrodded buildings)	16
	Petroleum and its products	10
	Spontaneous ignition	6
	Lights (other than electric)	4
	Incendiarism	3
		<hr/> 1,335 <hr/>
(c) Brick and Frame—Unprotected		
	Unknown causes of fire	38
	Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)	35
	Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes	21
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	16
	Exposure fires	16
	Electricity	14
	Chimneys, flues (overheated and defective)	14
	Hot ashes, coals and open fires	8
	Matches (other than smoker's carelessness)	6
	Lights (other than electric)	2
	Lightning (unrodded buildings)	2
	Spontaneous ignition	2
	Incendiarism	2
	Sparks on roofs	1
	Petroleum and its products	1
		<hr/> 178 <hr/>
FARM PROPERTY		
	Unknown causes of fire	99
	Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes	36
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	29
	Chimneys, flues (overheated and defective)	26
	Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)	24
	Electricity	18
	Hot ashes, coals and open fires	13
	Lightning (unrodded buildings)	11
	Spontaneous ignition	10
	Incendiarism	10
	Exposure fires	5
	Matches (other than smoker's carelessness)	5
	Petroleum and its products	3
	Sparks on roofs	2
	Lights (other than electric)	2
		<hr/> 293 <hr/>

TABLE NO. 3 (Continued)

Property	Causes	No. of Fires
CHURCHES		
	Unknown causes of fire	4
	Hot ashes, coals and open fires	2
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	2
	Lightning (unrodded buildings)	1
		<hr/> 9
		<hr/>
HOSPITALS AND SANATORIA		
	Electricity	1
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	1
	Unknown causes of fire	1
		<hr/> 3
		<hr/>
PUBLIC HALLS		
	Unknown causes of fire	3
	Exposure fires	1
	Matches (other than smoker's carelessness)	1
	Electricity	1
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	1
		<hr/> 7
		<hr/>
SCHOOLS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS		
	Unknown causes of fire	8
	Chimneys, flues (overheated and defective)	5
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	3
	Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes	2
	Hot ashes, coals and open fires	1
		<hr/> 19
		<hr/>
ALL OTHER INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS		
	Unknown causes of fire	4
	Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)	2
	Matches (other than smoker's carelessness)	1
		<hr/> 7
		<hr/>
WAREHOUSES		
	Unknown causes of fire	8
	Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)	2
	Spontaneous ignition	2
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	2
	Hot ashes, coals and open fires	1
	Matches (other than smoker's carelessness)	1
		<hr/> 16
		<hr/>

TABLE NO. 3 (Continued)

Property	Causes	No. of Fires
RETAIL STORES AND CONTENTS		
	Unknown causes of fire	46
	Exposure fires	19
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	17
	Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)	15
	Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes	11
	Electricity	7
	Matches (other than smoker's carelessness)	5
	Chimneys, flues (overheated and defective)	4
	Hot ashes, coals and open fires	2
	Lightning (unrodded buildings)	2
	Spontaneous ignition	2
	Petroleum and its products	1
	Incendiarism	1
		<hr/> 132 <hr/>
HOTELS		
	Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)	32
	Unknown causes of fire	7
	Exposure fires	2
	Matches (other than smoker's carelessness)	1
	Electricity	1
	Incendiarism	1
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	1
	Chimneys, flues (overheated and defective)	1
		<hr/> 46 <hr/>
FOOD PLANTS AND DISTILLERIES		
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	3
	Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes	2
	Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)	2
	Chimneys, flues (overheated and defective)	1
	Hot ashes, coals and open fires	1
	Electricity	1
	Unknown causes of fire	1
		<hr/> 11 <hr/>
FLOUR MILLS AND GRAIN ELEVATORS		
	Unknown causes of fire	6
	Exposure fires	1
	Matches (other than smoker's carelessness)	1
	Electricity	1
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	1
		<hr/> 10 <hr/>
OIL PROPERTIES AND OIL TANKS		
	Unknown causes of fire	10
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	8
	Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes	4
	Hot ashes, coals and open fires	3
	Electricity	3
	Chimneys, flues (overheated and defective)	1
	Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)	1
	Matches (other than smoker's carelessness)	1
		<hr/> 31 <hr/>

TABLE NO. 3 (Continued)

Property	Causes	No. of Fires
SAW AND SHINGLE MILLS		
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	3
	Electricity	1
		<hr/> 4
		<hr/>
LUMBER YARDS		
	Unknown causes of fire	3
	Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes	1
	Lightning (unrodded buildings)	1
		<hr/> 5
		<hr/>
WOODWORKERS		
	Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)	2
	Incendiarism	2
	Chimneys, flues (overheated and defective)	1
	Electricity	1
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	1
	Unknown causes of fire	1
		<hr/> 8
		<hr/>
METAL WORKERS—GARAGES		
	Unknown causes of fire	47
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	27
	Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes	8
	Petroleum and its products	7
	Electricity	6
	Hot ashes, coals and open fires	5
	Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)	4
	Exposure fires	3
	Matches (other than smoker's carelessness)	2
	Lightning (unrodded buildings)	1
		<hr/> 110
		<hr/>
MINING PROPERTY		
	Unknown causes of fire	2
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	1
	Incendiarism	1
	Chimneys, flues (overheated and defective)	1
		<hr/> 5
		<hr/>
RAILWAY PROPERTY— LIGHT AND POWER PLANTS		
	Unknown causes of fire	4
	Miscellaneous causes of fire	4
	Electricity	1
	Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes	1
		<hr/> 10
		<hr/>

TABLE NO. 3 (Continued)

Property	Causes	No. of Fires
MISCELLANEOUS MANUFACTURING PREMISES		
Unknown causes of fire		3
Miscellaneous causes of fire		2
Incendiarism		1
Lightning (unrodded buildings)		1
Electricity		1
Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes		1
		<hr/> 9 <hr/>
MISCELLANEOUS NON-MANUFACTURING PREMISES		
Unknown causes of fire		19
Miscellaneous causes of fire		14
Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)		14
Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes		7
Exposure fires		6
Chimneys, flues (overheated and defective)		5
Electricity		4
Spontaneous ignition		3
Hot ashes, coals and open fires		2
Matches (other than smoker's carelessness)		2
Petroleum and its products		2
		<hr/> 78 <hr/>
PROPERTY OTHER THAN BUILDINGS		
Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)		51
Miscellaneous causes of fire		45
Unknown causes of fire		45
Electricity		29
Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes		4
Petroleum and its products		3
Incendiarism		3
Matches (other than smoker's carelessness)		2
Hot ashes, coals and open fires		2
Exposure fires		1
		<hr/> 185 <hr/>

TABLE NO. 4

INSTITUTION AND ASSEMBLY BUILDINGS (Excluding Theatres and Clubs)

Date	Location	Occupancy	Damage	Class of Buildings	Cause
Jan. 15	Lethbridge	Church	\$ 75,000	Brick	Poor housekeeping
Jan. 10	Edmonton	Church	25	Brick	
				veneer	Unknown
Jan. 9	Mearns	School	7,591	Frame	Overheated pipe
Jan. 8	Big Stone	Hall	150	Frame	Overheated pipe
Jan. 27	Hines Creek	School	377	Frame	Unknown
Jan. 5	Lethbridge	Nurses' Home	35	Frame	Cigarette
Jan. 7	Calgary	Y.M.C.A.	8,082	Frame	Unknown
Feb. 7	Lethbridge	Church	23	Frame	Incinerator sparks
Feb. 6	Mallaig	Hall	70	Frame	Electricity
Feb. 17	Caroline	School	96	Frame	Unknown
Mar. 17	Balzac	Hall	101	Frame	Light bulb
Mar. 16	St. Paul	School	2,814	Frame	Defective chimney
Mar. 28	Keg River	School	84	Frame	Overheated pipe
Mar. 30	Drumheller	School	1,875	Frame	Coal seam ignition
Apr. 9	Athabasca	Church	14,331	Frame	Unknown
Apr. 3	Vilna	Church	15,950	Frame	Unknown

TABLE NO. 4—Continued

Date	Location	Occupancy	Damage	Class of Buildings	Cause
Apr. 3	Vilna	Hall	173	Frame	Exposure
Apr. 7	Edmonton	School	449	Brick	Overturnd heater
Apr. 16	Clover Bar	School	5,175	Frame	Furnace
Apr. 9	Heisler	School	2,823	Frame	Unknown
May 12	Claresholm	Hospital	61	Frame	Short circuit
May 10	St. Albert	Church convent	662	Brick	Lighted match in coal chute
June 16	Edmonton	University	492	Brick	Acid ignited
June 19	Camrose	School	764	Frame	Unknown
June 23	Calgary	Hall	2,750	Frame	Unknown
July 17	Lethbridge	Church	21	Frame	Children ignited paper
July 14	Bellevue	Hall	50	Brick	Children playing with matches
July 14	Lethbridge	Hall	3,594	Frame	Unknown
July 19	Lamont	School	767	Frame	Unknown
Aug. 20	Manyberries	Church	3,487	Frame	Lightning
Aug. 20	Ponoka	Hospital	64	Frame	Burning embers
Sept. 22	Sangudo	School	1,969	Frame	Defective chimney
Sept. 24	Coalhurst	School	24	Frame	Sparks from boiler
Sept. 5	Bowness	School	6,000	Frame	Unknown
Sept. 5	Calgary	Y.W.C.A.	59	Brick	Cigarette
Sept. 27	Oliver	Mental Institution	3,994	Frame	Unknown
Oct. 26	Calgary	Church	47	Frame	Sparks from garbage
Oct. 20	Lethbridge	Hospital	1,500	Brick	Unknown
Oct. 9	Edmonton	Hall	20	Frame	Unknown
Oct. 20	Edmonton	School	25	Brick	Gas flame
Oct. 29	New Sarepta	School	593	Frame	Unknown
Oct. 6	Edmonton	School	450	Frame	Unknown
Nov. 28	Good Fish Lake	Church	7,534	Frame	Unknown
Dec. 2	Edmonton	Hall	2,150	Frame	Unknown
Dec. 10	Edmonton	Hall	100	Brick	Natural gas leak
TOTAL			\$172,401		

TABLE NO. 5
LOSSES CAUSED BY LIGHTNING

Month	Location	Occupancy	Damage		Total
			Building	Contents	
May	Lloydminster	Manufacturing Plant	\$11,384	\$15,503	\$26,887
June	Calgary	Dwelling	.....	60	60
	Cardston	Dwelling	33	40	73
	Edmonton	Dwelling	189	25	214
	Calgary	Dwelling	33	.....	33
	Calgary	Dwelling	.....	6	6
	Calgary	Dwelling	661	.....	661
	Bruderheim	Dwelling	149	.....	149
	Dollard	Barn	1,000	.....	1,000
July	Calgary	Dwelling	65	.....	65
	Calgary	Dwelling	61	.....	61
	Grande Prairie	Dwelling	539	.....	539
	Grande Prairie	Dwelling	550	.....	550
	Edmonton	Dwelling	20	.....	20
	Gull Lake	Summer Cottage	50	.....	50
	Vegreville	Barn	350	.....	350
	Bonnyville	Barn	175	.....	175
	James River	Dwelling	.....	7	7
	James River	Dwelling	13	.....	13
	Eagle Hill	Dwelling	20	.....	20
	Innisfree	Store	3,545	6,965	10,510
	Lethbridge	Lumber Shed	20	.....	20
	Clyde	Garage	72	78	150
August	Edmonton	Apartment	.....	284	284
	Calgary	Dwelling	235	.....	235
	Calgary	Dwelling	.....	119	119
	Calgary	Dwelling	.....	8	8
	Calgary	Dwelling	2,674	3,065	5,739
	Milk River	Dwelling	45	50	95
	Stettler	Hen House	600	.....	600
	Holden	Barn	100	.....	100
	Wembly	Dwelling	56	34	90
	Scotfield	Barn	6,000	.....	6,000
	Manyberries	Church	3,487	.....	3,487
	Edmonton	Dress Shop	.....	27	27
TOTALS			<u>\$32,126</u>	<u>\$26,271</u>	<u>\$58,397</u>

TABLE NO. 6
FIRE LOSSES BY PROPERTY CLASSIFICATION

Property	No. of Fires	Damage
1. Brick, etc., dwellings—protected	42	\$ 5,094
2. Frame, etc., dwellings—protected	1,335	465,274
3. Brick and frame, etc., dwellings—unprotected	178	174,803
4. Farm property	293	646,597
5A. Churches	9	116,418
5B. Hospitals and sanatoria	3	1,625
5C. Public halls	7	6,158
5D. Schools and educational institutions	19	32,518
5E. All other institutional buildings	7	15,682
6. Warehouses of all kinds	16	72,461
7. Retail stores	132	(Buildings) 214,171 (Contents) 361,559
8. Hotels	46	(Buildings) 16,261 (Contents) 10,745
9. Food plants, distilleries, etc.	11	64,601
10. Flour mills and grain elevators	10	305,788
11. Oil risks, oil tanks, etc.	31	278,714
12. Saw and shingle mills	4	42,984
13. Lumber yards	5	28,315
14. Woodworkers	8	11,154
15. Metal workers—garages	110	1,786,093
16. Mining property	5	341,803
17. Railway property, light and power plants	10	31,734
18. Miscellaneous manufacturing premises	9	97,044
19. Miscellaneous non-manufacturing premises	78	391,276
20. Property other than buildings	185	133,467
TOTAL	2,553	\$5,652,339

TABLE NO. 7
CAUSES OF FIRES

Causes	No. of Fires	Total of Damage
51. Chimneys, flues, overheated and defective	80	\$ 215,307
52. Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes	175	397,575
53. Hot ashes, coals and open fires	73	32,913
54. Sparks on roofs	3	9,280
55. Exposure fires	79	187,478
56. Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, matches)	910	155,254
57. Matches (other than smokers' carelessness)	100	47,477
58. Lights (other than electric)	9	18,613
59. Electricity	173	208,772
60. Lightning (unrodded buildings)	35	58,397
60A. Lightning (rodded buildings) .....	.....	.....
61. Spontaneous ignition	25	51,886
62. Petroleum and its products	27	68,653
63. Incendiarism	24	338,583
64. Miscellaneous (see table No. 7A)	356	1,067,459
65. Motion picture film ignition .....	.....	.....
66. Unknown causes of fires	484	2,794,692
TOTAL	2,553	\$5,652,339

TABLE NO. 7A
CAUSES OF FIRES (Breakdown of No. 64—Miscellaneous)

Causes	No. of Fires	Damage
1. Overheated or defective appliances	43	\$ 22,217
2. Hot grease and wax	42	21,092
3. Ignition of gasoline, leaking or used for cleaning	25	39,575
4. Materials too close to radiants, stoves, etc.	23	25,083
5. Children playing with fire	19	1,327
6. Motors igniting gasoline	17	11,803
7. Firecrackers	14	1,150
8. Light bulb ignited chesterfield	12	529
9. Garbage fires	12	809
10. Lighted candles	11	1,595
11. Welding torch or arc welder igniting materials	11	14,374
12. Explosions	9	32,062
13. Motor exhaust pipes defective or backfired	9	7,117
14. Miscellaneous	9	5,737
15. Ignition on stove or heater	7	1,218
16. Furniture too close to radiants, stoves or heaters	7	2,973
17. Break or leak in gasoline or oil pipe line	6	227,380
18. Overheated motors other than car	6	1,241
19. Fire from incinerator	5	500
20. Smoke damage	4	922
21. Chemical fires	4	16,618
22. Gas fires	4	3,335
23. Natural gas explosion	4	14,956
24. Ignition of oil rags other than spontaneous	4	8,804
25. Hot plate or irons set on rugs	3	61
26. Cleaning fluid	3	679
27. Burns to rug	3	77
28. Burning incense and cracked glass ashtray	3	68
29. Spark from stove	3	317
30. Explosion in paint shop	3	480,456
31. Wind blowing sparks to building	3	20,637
32. Ignition of papers around base of refrigerator	2	130
33. Heater tampered with by unauthorized persons	2	4,547
34. Accumulation of rubbish ignited	2	75,165
35. Friction	2	466
36. Tire ignited after blowout	2	174
37. Defective electrical circuit in car	2	769
38. Mechanical failure	2	815
39. Sun reflecting or magnifying	2	1,057
40. Penny in fuse box	1	250
41. Spark from locomotive	1	149
42. Thawing frozen pipes	1	5,136
43. Ignition of coal seam beneath school	1	1,875
44. Lumber falling on coal oil heater	1	1,500
45. Suitcase fell on cigarette lighter in car	1	118
46. Fuel gauge exploded	1	8,204
47. Squirrels scraped shavings against hot pipe	1	237
48. Cat knocked over coal oil lamp	1	1,046
49. Hot soot sucked into vacuum cleaner	1	9
50. Spark in trap tank of dryer	1	500
51. Sawdust in electric sander ignited	1	600
TOTAL	356	\$1,067,459

TABLE NO. 8
LARGEST LOSSES DURING THE YEAR

Date	Location	Occupancy	Loss	Cause
Jan. 14	Edmonton	Dwelling	\$ 10,075	Unknown
Jan. 10	Wanham	Dwelling and garage.	23,526	Defective wiring
Jan. 13	Marwayne	Dwelling	11,090	Gas lamp exploded
Jan. 15	Grande Prairie	Motel	14,547	Unknown
Jan. 15	Lethbridge	Church	75,000	Poor housekeeping
Jan. 27	Edmonton	Drug store	17,563	Unknown
Jan. 15	Mayerthorpe	General store	13,291	Unknown
Jan. 7	Sangudo	General store	37,693	Unknown
Jan. 28	Turner Valley	Gasoline tank	198,056	Break in gas line
Jan. 24	Barrhead	Sawmill	15,335	Static electricity
Jan. 23	St. Paul	Garage	20,663	Cigarette
Jan. 31	Athabasca	Garage	16,000	Unknown
Jan. 12	Crossfield	Garage	11,005	Gasoline
Jan. 5	Camrose	Implement shop	12,324	Unknown
Jan. 15	Calgary	Sheet metal shop	11,408	Unknown
Jan. 27	Chipman	Garage	15,000	Unknown
Jan. 10	Suffield	Garage	13,121	Unknown
Jan. 14	Vermilion	Power plant	17,815	Broken gas line
Jan. 29	Bassano	Tractor	10,768	Collision
Feb. 28	Cold Lake	Officers' quarters	154,609	Heater overturned
Feb. 2	Notikewen	Dwelling	16,000	Short circuit
Feb. 9	Calgary	Office	22,163	Gas explosion
Feb. 25	Boyle	General store	45,249	Unknown
Feb. 1	McLennan	Bakeshop	22,803	Overheated chimney
Feb. 2	Calgary	Bottling works	28,333	Natural gas water heater
Feb. 7	Grand Centre	Garage	13,905	Unknown
Feb. 1	Condor	Garage	10,686	Unknown
Feb. 19	Canmore	Club and bar room	17,500	Accidental origin
Mar. 11	St. Paul	Dwelling	27,015	Overheated pipe
Mar. 5	Leslieville	Dwelling	19,850	Overheated pipe
Mar. 1	Kingsland	Dwelling	10,468	Oil burner
Mar. 31	Calgary	Warehouse	39,686	Unknown
Mar. 9	Lethbridge	Store	11,126	Electric iron
Mar. 30	Edmonton	Lumber	19,098	Unknown
Mar. 11	Edmonton	Brick plant	40,000	Unknown
Apr. 9	Athabasca	Church	14,331	Unknown
Apr. 3	Vilna	Church	15,950	Unknown
Apr. 12	Ensign	Store	19,401	Plugged flue
Apr. 7	Grande Prairie	Sawmill	19,250	Pit fire
Apr. 15	Bearspaw	Tool shed	13,308	Unknown
May 26	Seba Beach	Service station	12,404	Unknown
May 20	Manola	Garage	10,547	Unknown
May 23	Lloydminster	Paper mfg. plant	26,887	Lightning
June 16	Abee	Grocery store	10,540	Fire followed burglary
June 21	Calgary	Store	15,224	Unknown
June 28	Gleichen	Store	14,696	Fire followed burglary
June 6	Smoky River	Store	10,030	Unknown
June 10	Manning	Machine sales	17,216	Unknown
June 24	Waterton	Golf clubhouse	15,150	Unknown
July 2	Winterburn	Barn	13,659	Unknown
July 26	Innisfree	Hardware store	10,510	Lightning
July 21	Sedgewick	Garage	48,900	Unknown
July 1	Valleyview	Garage	14,260	Unknown
Aug. 24	Calgary	Fur stock	62,087	Exposure
Aug. 31	Devon	Garage	13,707	Unknown
Aug. 10	Stavely	Garage	14,691	Unknown
Sept. 5	Nanton	Dwelling	20,826	Faulty electrical insulation
Sept. 17	Brockett	Barn	12,000	Spontaneous ignition
Sept. 11	Edmonton	Butcher shop	16,000	Unknown
Sept. 21	Calahoo	Store	22,621	Unknown
Sept. 25	Faust	Feed storage	13,996	Unknown
Sept. 21	Calgary	Ice mfg. plant	15,141	Ammonia from compressor

TABLE NO. 8—Continued

Date	Location	Occupancy	Loss	Cause
Oct. 6	Calgary	Warehouse	44,398	Cigarette
Oct. 2	Imperial Mills	Garage	12,664	Gas ignited heater
Oct. 11	Bellevue	Coal tipple	305,000	Suspected incendiary
Oct. 30	Drumheller	Coal tipple	31,478	Unknown
Nov. 19	Rainier	Store	35,177	Unknown
Nov. 16	Picture Butte	Elevator	88,000	Exposure
Nov. 16	Picture Butte	Elevator	111,000	Unknown
Nov. 3	Breton	Poolroom	10,181	Unknown
Nov. 8	Banff	Restaurant	39,294	Unknown
Nov. 28	Lacombe	Arena and hall	200,000	Unknown
Dec. 22	Lethbridge	Dwelling	11,700	Overheated stove
Dec. 29	Edmonton	Barn	12,429	Unknown
Dec. 2	Bow Island	Barn	21,097	Unknown
Dec. 23	Harmattan	Dwelling	17,500	Explosion
Dec. 16	Calgary	Barn	11,832	Spontaneous ignition
Dec. 23	Hines Creek	Store	13,095	Unknown
Dec. 5	Innisfail	Garage	475,000	Spray paint ignited
Dec. 1	Camrose	Service station	14,912	Natural gas explosion
Dec. 24	Calgary	Hangar	875,000	Unknown
Dec. 20	Castor	Theatre and hall	14,534	Furnace explosion
Dec. 19	High River	Grain elevator	89,352	Unknown
TOTAL			3,969,746	

TABLE NO. 9

INSPECTIONS AND ORDERS ISSUED

Number of cities, towns and villages visited and inspected	594
Number of orders to remedy conditions (written).....	97
Number of orders to remedy conditions (verbal)	306
Number of orders to remedy conditions (written by fire chiefs)	1
Number of written recommendations	2,060
Number of buildings inspected	1,871

Character of Orders Issued:

Recharge or provide fire-extinguishing equipment	9
Improve housekeeping conditions	4
Repair or install fire alarm system	3
Protect combustible material near stovepipes and heaters	2
Provide exit doors and panic bolts	5
Repair faulty electric wiring	0
Install lights or signs over exits	3
Tear down or repair dilapidated buildings	12
Provide underground storage for petroleum products	7
Build or repair brick chimneys	4
Provide outdoor fire escapes	7
Relocate or correct hazards at bulk fuel oil stations	17
Discontinue storage under stairway	1
Remove or provide burner for planing mill shavings	2
Enclose inside stairwells	2
Provide approved and correctly installed oil-burning equipment	1
Discontinue gasoline for cleaning purposes	1
Other orders	17
TOTAL	97

TABLE NO. 9—Continued

Special Inspections:

Schools	72	Bulk fuel oil warehouses	49
Hotels	23	Institutions	26
Town fire departments	89	Others	79
Hospitals	20		
		TOTAL	358

Special Activities:

	Meetings	Films	Attendance
Fire prevention	172	92	15,375
Civil defence	19	13	554
Fire department equipment	71	60	2,046
Others	6	.....	23
TOTAL	268	165	17,998

Fire Drills:

Schools	93	Institutions	23
Hospitals	25	Others	13
		TOTAL	154

Number of fire departments inspected.....	220	Fire department practices held	64
Written recommendations to towns and villages re fire protection equipment..	314	Demonstrations of extinguishers in schools and hospitals	148

Building Plans Checked:

Schools	143	Dormitories	5
Hospitals	39	Bulk warehouses	49
Nurses' homes	7	Others	13
Hotels	12		
		TOTAL	268

TABLE NO. 10

FIRE INVESTIGATIONS

Number of fires investigated (departmental investigations only)	107
Number of informations laid reported to the department (arson)	8
Number of convictions (arson)	4
Stay of proceedings entered (arson)	nil
Charge withdrawn (arson)	nil
Action pending (arson)	1
Committed to mental institution	1
Dismissed	2
Prosecutions, false fire alarm (sec. 516A ccc)	6
Incendiary	24
Suspected incendiary	18

PROSECUTIONS—THE FIRE PREVENTION ACT

Non-compliance with the fire-prevention order	2
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Inspector's Mileage:

Mileage by car	99,175
Mileage by train	1,276
Mileage by plane	Nil
TOTAL	100,451

TABLE NO. 11
STATEMENT OF FATALITIES, 1953

Originating Cause	Men	Women	Children	Total
Smoke and gas suffocation .....	.....	.....	4	4
Clothing ignited from:				
(a) Fireplaces and open grates .....	.....	.....	2	2
(b) Furnaces, stoves and heaters .....	.....	.....	.....	Nil
(c) Smoking and matches	2	.....	.....	2
Entering a burning building .....	.....	.....	.....	Nil
Fire fighting—firemen .....	.....	.....	.....	Nil
Kerosene, range oil and fuel oil—				
(a) Stoves, lamps and torches	2	2	11	15
(b) Used to kindle fire .....	.....	1	.....	1
Petroleum production and storage	2	.....	.....	2
Trapped in burning buildings	9	4	5	18
Children left unattended .....	.....	.....	.....	Nil
Natural gas explosion .....	.....	.....	.....	Nil
Tractor upset, spilling gasoline	1	.....	.....	1
Gasoline explosions in homes	2	4	3	9
	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	18	11	25	54
	==	==	==	==

Injuries by fire discovered by investigations and taken from newspaper reports 27

TABLE NO. 12
FIRE LOSSES IN CITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES, AND INSPECTIONS REPORTED

Place	No. of Buildings Inspected	No. of Orders Issued	Fire Loss	Population
Acme	17	.....	\$ .....	300
Aerial	110	.....	.....	450
Alix	10	.....	.....	625
Alliance	3	.....	723	400
Andrew	32	1	.....	650
Ardmore .....	.....	.....	2,001	250
Arrowwood	10	3	465	232
Athabasca .....	.....	.....	33,255	1,260
Banff	127	127	39,692	2,550
Barrhead	11	6	3,450	1,600
Bashaw	20	.....	136	612
Beaverlodge	74	.....	.....	600
Bentley	8	8	950	485
Beverly .....	.....	.....	1,280	3,500
Bittern Lake	3	.....	.....	87
Black Diamond	5	.....	211	1,156
Blairmore	15	.....	158	2,000
Bluffton	5	5	400	150
Bowden	10	2	.....	298
Bow Island .....	.....	.....	231	810
Bowness .....	.....	.....	13,313	2,922
Boyle	13	8	45,399	300
Breton	25	.....	10,402	450
Brownvale	12	.....	.....	125
Bruce	12	.....	.....	150
Brooks .....	.....	.....	573	1,648
Bruderheim .....	.....	.....	.....	300
Calgary	11,430	7	439,686	156,748
Calmar	15	1	4,399	958
Camrose	70	4	29,736	5,100
Carbon	50	.....	.....	375
Cardston	10	.....	797	2,700
Carmangay	10	.....	.....	300
Castor	100	.....	14,534	850
Cereal .....	.....	.....	.....	160
Champion	27	1	600	340

TABLE NO 12—Continued

Place	No. of Buildings Inspected	No. of Orders Issued	Fire Loss	Population
Chauvin	11	3	.....	500
Chipman	75	2	15,035	225
Clandonald	25	.....	.....	245
Claresholm	400	.....	9,341	2,000
Clive .....	.....	.....	860	300
Clyde .....	.....	.....	150	219
Coaldale .....	.....	.....	42	500
Cochrane	7	.....	.....	525
Colinton	3	.....	15	150
Coleman .....	.....	.....	2,690	2,000
Consort .....	.....	.....	.....	425
Coronation .....	.....	.....	248	800
Cowley	8	.....	.....	150
Craigmyle	21	.....	1,000	136
Crossfield .....	.....	.....	25	443
Czar	21	.....	.....	104
Daysland	30	3	479	485
Delburne .....	.....	.....	343	395
Delia .....	.....	.....	430	279
Derwent	25	1	.....	268
Devon	187	2	3,202	1,500
Didsbury .....	.....	.....	676	1,026
Donnelly	3	.....	.....	250
Drumheller	20	.....	6,812	2,601
Eckville	21	.....	.....	416
Edgerton .....	.....	.....	3,800	309
Edmonton	12,024	72	338,730	183,411
Edson	12	.....	10,382	1,900
Fairview	150	25	1,286	1,116
Falher	11	.....	200	700
Forestburg	125	.....	15	550
Foremost .....	.....	.....	699	375
Fort Macleod .....	.....	.....	174	2,000
Fort Saskatchewan	22	.....	30	1,450
Frank	15	.....	846	250
Galahad	10	.....	.....	166
Gibbons	20	.....	.....	150
Girouxville	61	1	.....	312
Gleichen .....	.....	.....	16,177	430
Grande Prairie	483	1	22,044	4,000
Granum	50	1	.....	380
Grimshaw	14	.....	1,319	750
Hairy Hill	14	1	.....	205
Hanna .....	.....	.....	682	2,027
Hardisty	40	.....	260	650
High Prairie .....	.....	.....	1,205	1,200
High River .....	.....	.....	95,527	2,200
Hines Creek .....	.....	.....	32,841	300
Hughenden	10	2	.....	285
Innisfail	16	4	480,489	1,700
Innisfree	27	21	10,510	290
Irma	6	.....	.....	365
Jasper Place	127	7	5,778	12,000
Killam	60	3	.....	500
Lac La Biche	21	.....	3,686	1,050
Lacombe	2	.....	200,245	2,760
Lamont .....	.....	.....	767	650
Lavoy .....	.....	.....	.....	118
Leduc .....	.....	.....	1,142	2,000
Lethbridge	1,753	18	117,549	26,000
Lloydminster	20	12	7,168	4,558
Lougheed	3	.....	.....	275
Manning .....	.....	.....	18,458	800
Manville	20	.....	84	600

TABLE NO 12—Continued

Place	No. of Buildings Inspected	No. of Orders Issued	Fire Loss	Population
Mayerthorpe .....	.....	.....	21,356	472
McLennan .....	.....	.....	31,897	1,074
McMurray .....	.....	.....	4,506	680
Medicine Hat	600	.....	25,223	17,500
Milk River	25	.....	479	650
Millet .....	.....	.....	8,394	500
Minburn	9	.....	43	195
Mirror .....	.....	.....	.....	701
Morinville .....	.....	.....	2,051	892
Mundare	127	2	1,199	800
Myrnam	148	12	51,46	401
Nanton .....	.....	.....	915	970
Nordegg	20	.....	154	1,600
Olds .....	.....	.....	3,905	1,617
Onoway	4	.....	43	200
Oyen	18	.....	50	565
Peace River	330	12	5,385	2,000
Picture Butte	41	.....	207,463	900
Pincher Creek .....	.....	.....	2,362	1,700
Ponoka	14	2	3,354	3,200
Provost	24	.....	187	850
Raymond	40	18	17,160	2,450
Redcliff	45	20	67	1,800
Red Deer	250	53	7,706	10,050
Redwater	28	9	854	1,308
Rocky Mountain House .....	.....	.....	3,521	1,147
Rosedale .....	.....	.....	8,020	400
Ryley	28	1	.....	410
Sangudo .....	.....	.....	41,785	300
Seba Beach .....	.....	.....	.....	70
Sedgewick	20	1	48,900	550
Smoky Lake	110	2	256	600
St. Albert .....	.....	.....	1,697	1,129
St. Paul	130	11	21,663	2,000
Standard	24	24	.....	237
Stavely	28	2	15,143	400
Stettler	87	2	352	3,300
Stony Plain	30	1	35	1,000
Strathmore	10	2	106	700
Strome	24	.....	.....	300
Sylvan Lake .....	.....	.....	212	1,300
Taber	828	.....	1,024	3,500
Thorhild	16	.....	8,868	375
Thorsby .....	.....	.....	4,376	425
Three Hills	15	.....	26	1,200
Tilley	10	5	.....	260
Tofield .....	.....	.....	.....	692
Trochu	30	28	.....	850
Turner Valley	25	.....	196	830
Two Hills	96	.....	.....	700
Vegreville	300	2	6,178	2,500
Vermilion	60	.....	100	2,200
Viking	62	14	12,643	740
Vilna .....	.....	.....	16,497	378
Wainwright	15	11	1,769	2,800
Wanham	10	.....	24,516	215
Waskatenau	12	.....	.....	250
Wetaskiwin	4	.....	525	4,000
Whitelaw	6	.....	.....	225
Wildwood	90	2	1,077	450
Willingdon .....	.....	.....	3,508	550
Youngstown .....	.....	.....	37	325
TOTAL	32,000	588	\$2,628,761	

